

July 2, 2003

To the People of Missouri:

We are pleased to present Missouri's Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, or STIP, for fiscal years 2004–2008 (July 1, 2003 – June 30, 2008). In this document, you will find a comprehensive list of almost 700 transportation improvement projects, worth \$4.6 billion, that we plan to undertake during the next five years. This document, approved by the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission, is our commitment to you!

The Missouri Department of Transportation is guided by our Long-Range Transportation Direction, which sets the department's direction for the next 20 years. It is a fiscally unconstrained look at what we would have to do and at the resources we would need to accomplish everything you expect from us. It provides the vision for project development activities. As we further refine Missouri's transportation needs, the most significant projects go into the STIP.

The STIP includes projects for highways and bridges, aviation, railroads, waterways and public transportation. The largest funding amount, \$3.9 billion, is allocated to the state's highway and bridge construction schedule. The five-year program is updated each year at this time. As one year of work is completed, a new fifth year is added.

Missouri's highways need more attention than ever due to increased traffic and aging roads and bridges. This five-year program addresses many of the state's highest priority needs, including an increased emphasis on taking care of our existing facilities. Unfortunately, limited funds prevent us from doing more.

This 2004-2008 STIP incorporates the new funding distribution method approved by the commission in January 2003. This new funding allocation is not fully implemented in this STIP until state fiscal year 2007. The new funding distribution better balances taking care of the state's existing roads and bridges with new highway construction. The process uses objective criteria -- including vehicle miles traveled, lane miles, population and employment -- to determine the funding distribution.

In this STIP, taking-care-of-the-system funding will nearly double, from an annual average of approximately \$210 million to \$400 million. This funding level will result in a 4- to 6-percent decrease, over the next five years, in the total number of bridges and miles of roadway in poor condition. The taking-care-of-the-system category also includes dedicated funding for the new interstate rehabilitation program.

In addition to the emphasis on taking care of the existing transportation system, the STIP includes several four-laning projects that will complete major highway corridors with two-lane gaps. Working on these corridors is consistent with MoDOT's emphasis on finishing what's been started.

By finishing what's been started, you will see less money dedicated to system expansion. In 2002–2003, for example, system expansion accounted for 57 percent of the funding, and taking care of the existing system accounted for 31 percent of the funding. From 2004–2008, 34 percent of the funds are dedicated to system expansion, and 55 percent of the funds are dedicated to taking care of the existing system.

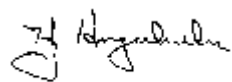
The total STIP construction funds include an additional \$40 million as a result of project savings during the past year and an additional \$20 million each year in 2004, 2005 and 2006 for design, project scope and land purchases in anticipation of increased federal funding. The reauthorization of the federal funding program is scheduled for later this year.

An important new element in the STIP planning process is the extent of local involvement. MoDOT has made extensive efforts to involve the public in developing the STIP and determining the funding distribution method. We want to give communities more influence over how their transportation dollars are spent. Various planning partners, transportation stakeholders and the general public have helped identify the road and bridge improvement projects in the STIP. In using the new funding distribution method, most of the money allocated each year will be reviewed by local officials as we work together to make decisions on which projects will be built first. MoDOT addresses the issues, comments and concerns raised during these public participation efforts the best we can.

The 2004–2008 STIP also includes transportation improvements identified by metropolitan planning organizations in St. Louis, Kansas City, Springfield, Columbia, Jefferson City, Joplin and St. Joseph. The STIP projects located in these areas are subject to discussion and approval by the appropriate metropolitan planning organization.

We welcome your comments and will be happy to answer your questions or provide additional information. If we can help you, please contact us at our toll free customer service number, 1-888-ASK MODOT (275-6636), by e-mail at our web site, www.modot.org, or call the local MoDOT district offices.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "H. Hungerbeeler", written in a cursive style.

Henry Hungerbeeler
Director